

**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR**  
**OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**SEPA Threshold Determination**  
**for the**  
**2006 Downtown Code Cleanup Ordinance**

**Project Sponsor:** City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

**Location of Proposal:** The affected area is primarily Downtown, with a couple of proposed changes relating to additional zones

**BACKGROUND**

**Proposal Description**

The proposal includes:

***Changes to Downtown Code Sections***

- Incorporate updated and corrected maps, and correct erroneous map references;
- Add elementary and secondary schools as uses that satisfy street level use requirements;
- Specify that tower spacing regulations apply in DMC zones with height limits over 160 feet south of Union Street;
- Correct the point at which nonresidential tower separation limits apply (above a height of 240 feet rather than 145 feet);
- Remove a residential tower width exception for combined lots;
- Revise requirements for provision of pedestrian lighting;
- Clarify the exception for the location of above-grade parking in Section 23.49.019;
- Clarify the regulations for the location of access to parking;
- Repeal an obsolete vesting provision for developments that participated in the Transfer of Development Credits Program downtown;
- Repeal an obsolete definition for maximum structure height in downtown zones; and
- Remove an obsolete reference from the Downtown Amenity Standards.

***Changes to Other Code Sections***

- Amend Section 23.41.012 to specify that Design Review departures may not be granted from Land Use Code provisions for transportation concurrency; definitions; measurements; director's decisions regarding required location of access to parking; and most requirements related to streets, alleys and easements in Chapter 23.53;
- Amend Section 23.45.008 to clarify the effect of changes in definitions on special provisions for parking for low-income housing in multifamily zones.

**ANALYSIS - OVERVIEW**

The following describes the analysis conducted to determine if the proposal is likely to result in *probable significant adverse environmental impacts*. This threshold determination is based on:

- *the proposal*, as described above and in memoranda;
- the information contained in the *SEPA checklist*;
- additional information, such as analysis and commentary of City staff; and
- the experience of DPD analysts in reviewing similar documents and actions.

## **ELEMENTS OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Adoption of the proposed amendments would result in no immediate adverse short-term impacts because the adoption would be a non-project action. The discussion below generally evaluates the potential long-term impacts that might conceivably result from differences in future development patterns due to the proposed amendments.

### **Natural and Built Environment**

This threshold determination acknowledges and agrees with the assessment of potential adverse impacts that is presented in the applicant's checklist. The applicant's discussion was largely confined to potential adverse land use impacts, most of which are applicable only to Downtown Seattle. Many of the proposed items of change would correct errors, omissions or oversights in these codes and as such would merely repair the code to a condition it is already expected to have. The real impact potential for such changes is negligible. Other items (including a couple that affect areas outside Downtown) would have slight levels of positive land use impacts in terms of reducing the instances of departures or exceptions from particular types of code requirements.

A couple of change items are cited as having minor implications for building bulk. To the extent that certain changes would result in somewhat more additional building bulk in limited areas of Downtown, the additional bulk would represent a degree of adverse impact. However, that level of potential impact is concluded to be not significant—rather, it would represent a modest additional thickening of potential non-residential building profiles between heights of approximately 145 and 240 feet, on sites 40,000 square feet or more. Other items cited as having potential negative effects are also interpreted as not being significant adverse impacts.

## **DECISION**

- [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c).
- [ ] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c).

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gordon Clowers, Planning and Development Specialist  
 Department of Planning and Development